



**Pacific Northwest Region
Malheur National Forest
541-575-3000
www.fs.usda.gov/malheur**

FIRE UPDATE

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July 7, 2015
12:30 p.m.

West Fork Fire Update

JOHN DAY, OR – The Forest's Type 3 Team took over the West Fork Fire, burning on the north slope of the Aldrich Mountain range in the former Thorn Fire area, on Monday, July 6 at 1300.

After burning actively through the night and into today, with uphill runs and spotting, the fire is now estimated at 310 acres. Growth was shown to be mainly towards the west. Thunderstorms with gusty, erratic winds are expected over the fire area as early as this afternoon, with abundant lightning which could increase the chance of the fire spreading.

Crews continue to face extremely dangerous conditions of steep terrain, falling timber snags, and minimal escape routes. With a red flag warning in the forecast, high winds blowing over snags is a main concern. Resources will be identifying and working to mitigate these trees in areas of concern. Locating potential safety zones during these conditions will be a focus early in the day.

Fire crews and heavy equipment will work to build lines around the fire perimeter, as well as to prepare for potential burnout operations. Crews will focus on holding the fire from crossing onto private property, and strengthening the east flank of the fire. Direct line construction and aviation assets will also be heavily utilized to keep fire spread to a minimum.

Additional resources assigned include five 20-person crews, one tender, four falling modules, two skidgines, two dozers, one masticator, and 11 miscellaneous overhead.

The fire danger rating across the Malheur National Forest is currently at HIGH. Industrial Fire Precaution Level II and Phase A of Public Use Restrictions are in effect forest-wide.

For more information on the Malheur National Forest, please visit us at www.fs.usda.gov/malheur, follow [U.S. Forest Service- Malheur National Forest](#) on Facebook, and follow [@MalheurNF](#) on Twitter for all the latest forest news.

For additional forest information, contact 541-575-3000. To report a fire, please contact the John Day Interagency Dispatch Center at 541-575-1321, or Burns Interagency Communication Center at 541-573-1000.

Local dispatch information can be found at <http://bicc-jdidc.org/index.shtml>.

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NEWS RELEASE

(continued)



Pictures taken today of the West Fork Fire show the extreme hazards that crews face, including timber snags, steep, rocky terrain, and minimal escape routes.

